

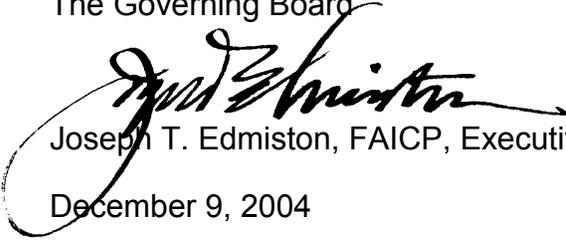


# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:   
Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Officer

DATE: December 9, 2004

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VIII: Consideration of resolution authorizing acceptance of two grants from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to acquire a portion of a 496 acre ownership in the western portion of the Verdugo Mountains and authorizing acceptance of a donation for the remainder portion of the property.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing acceptance of two grants from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to acquire a portion of a 496 acre ownership in the western portion of the Verdugo Mountains and authorizing acceptance of a donation for the remainder portion of the property.

Background: At its December 6, 2004 meeting, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) authorized two grants to the MRCA for acquisition of Verdugo Mountains-Majors property. The MRCA submitted two grant applications, each in the amount of \$1,005,000, to the Conservancy for funding from Propositions 12 and 40. The Majors properties (APN 2545-016-005; 2545-017-007, 2545-019-001,-004,-008,-010,-011; 2545-020-001; 2546-009-006; 2546-010-011; 2546-011-002,-004), total 461.8 acres. The remainder of the 496-acre ownership will be acquired through donation.

Part of the Verdugo Mountains-Big Tujunga Wash Wildlife Corridor, the subject properties are on generally rugged terrain with high quality cover of chaparral, coastal sage scrub, and scattered oaks. Several blue line streams are located on the property, as well as other smaller drainages. The habitat linkage between Big Tujunga Wash and the Verdugo Mountains is narrow but does not require any additional road crossing structures to be functional. Given the proximity to the Foothill Freeway and the surrounding infrastructure, the subject properties would be a prime opportunity for both residential and commercial development if not protected as open space.